

Early in the week commencing July 20th, a first instar larva escaped from its container and wandered on to some cross-leaved heath (*Erica tetralix*) flowers which were close by, by, having been gathered for the purpose of feeding larvae of another species. It began feeding on the flowers, and was kept indoors in the same room as our 'control' batch. Its growth rate compared very favourably with that of the larvae in the conservatory, and it buried for pupation on August 19th. It was of the light green with pink patches form, and had fed exclusively on the flowers of cross-leaved heath at room temperatures, i.e. 18-20°C. A healthy pupa was produced, and the moth — a perfect female — emerged on September 25th.

Is cross-leaved heath a new pabulum for *H. peltigera* in the U.K.? The flowers would seem to be a healthy diet, as the frass produced is quite dry, in contrast to the very wet frass produced by a diet of heath groundsel leaves.

References

- Heath et al. *Moths and Butterflies of Great Britain and Ireland*.
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Pratt, C. The fate of *H. peltigera* D. & S. in Sussex. *Entomologist's Rec. J. Var.* 93. 137-141.
Allen, P. B. M. *Larval Foodplants*.

RHAMPHOMYIA BARBATA MCQ. (DIPT.: EMPIDIDAE) AND CANTHARIS FIGURATA MANN. (COL.) IN S. E. LONDON. — On 8th June last, on some marshy ground just east of Shooters Hill, I caught a male of the above very local and usually rare fly by sweeping rank herbage of various kinds in a willow spinney. Though some time was spent at the place, no other was seen. The species is tolerably distinctive in the net by its grey thorax and reddish abdomen, and is remarkable in the male sex from its peculiar hind-leg characters. The records of *R. barbata* appear to be scattered and not numerous; for N. W. Kent, Collin (1961, *Brit. Flies* 6(2): 372) gives Dartford (Yerbury) and Thames Marshes (H. W. Andrews).

At the same time and place I swept two males and a female of the soldier-beetle *Cantharis figurata* Mann., all within a very limited area. This is not a common species, as Fowler remarks in the VCH list for Kent (1909:155) in recording it from Chattenden and Snodland — both places much farther east in the county. I have always found it very local and somewhat scarce; like the previous insect, it is probably new to the London Suburbs. — A. A. ALLEN.